Finally, the Member said that the provisions of Part III of the Puduval Rules were also defective, inasmuch as they fomented discord among the people and as the poor people could not compete with the rich in public auction. He suggested that, instead of small blocks being sold in public auction, they might be registered in the names of poor applicants on payment of a moderate *tharavila* and assessment, with due regard to the quality of the lands concerned. He prayed that the Puduval Rules might be modified so as to remove the above defects.

Dewan's reply.—It is difficult to understand what your grievances are. You criticise more the working of the Rules than the Rules themselves. You complain against the high rates of *tharavila* fixed by Tahsildars. The rules provide, as far as I remember, for the deduction of the value of improvements from the estimated *tharavila* in the case of occupied lands. You do not evidently want the *tharavila* to be fixed with reference to the value of the adjoining lands. What is the criterion that you would suggest, if this is not to be adopted? We must have some sort of basis upon which to fix the value of the land and the basis adopted by us is the price which the adjoining lands would fetch. The rules also provide, in the case of poor ryots, that no *tharavila* need be recovered. They also provide for the remission of *thadivila* up to Rs. 10 in each case. If the Tahsildar or any other revenue officer errs in carrying out the rules, if he fixes the *tharavila* or the assessment at a rate which is considered too high, the remedy for the person adversely affected lies in appeal. Is it possible for the Government to fix the *tharavila* and the assessment for each and every piece of land that is sought to be obtained on registry? That must be left to the discretion of the local officers.

12. Lowering the rates of tharavila and thadivila to mitigate the hardships of applicants for registry of puduval lands.

Mr. J. John (Member, Todupuzha Taluk) spoke about the high rates of *tharavila* and *thadivila* imposed on *puduval* lands. He said that the *puduval* lands now available for assignment in Travancore were situated in hilly tracts, infested by wild beasts and with no means of communication. Those hilly tracts, known as *cherikals*, the Member said, used to be cultivated with paddy in former days, but that kind of cultivation had now become extinct, as all lands useful for the purpose had been assigned away to foreigners and well-to-do Travancoreans for planting tea, rubber, etc. The rates of *tharavila* and *thadivila* recovered in respect of fertile lands granted for such cultivation were comparatively low, while the applicants for *puduval* lands were put to much hardship, since such lands were in inaccessible localities and since they had to pay for the tree-growth on them at tariff rates. Those trees were not of any use to them, and there was no means of removing the timber to the plains for want of means of communication. As regards *tharavila*, the Member said that, while fertile lands had been granted to planters on a nominal *tharavila*, heavy prices were being now demanded from the poor for less fertile lands, although those lands were intended for the growth of taxable trees. The Member also referred to the indiscriminate way in which the rates of *tharavila* and *thadivila* were being fixed by the Proverthicars.

The Member then observed that the policy adopted by the Hyderabad Government in the matter of *puduval* registry would go to show how a Government, mindful of the interests of the public, could help the agriculturists. He described how one million acres of land in Hyderabad had been cut up into small blocks of 100 acres each and offered to the people free of *thadivila* and with no tax for the first four years after registry. When compared with that praiseworthy policy of the Government of His Exalted Highness the Nizam, the policy now adopted by the Travancore Government which added to the difficulties of the people was, in the opinion of the Member, deplorable.

The Member, therefore, prayed (1) that the rates of *tharavila* for *puduval* lands in hilly tracts might be reduced; (2) that *thadivila* might not be realised at tariff rates and that the same might be considerably reduced in the case of trees not saleable in the locality; and (3) that arrangements might be made for the prompt disposal of *puduval* applications.

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Dewan's reply.—I have no objection to re-examine this question of *tharavila* and *thadivila*, and I shall do it. But I must protest against certain statements made by you which imply that the Government are not mindful of the interests of the people. There are certain misstatements also in regard to waste lands given for planting products like tea and rubber. Suitable *tharavila* is realised for the assignment of these lands also. Whereas in the case of lands granted under the Puduval Rules, the minimum rate of *tharavila* for dry lands is Rs. 10 only, the minimum rate is Rs. 25 for tea and rubber lands. You will, I believe, admit that the lands which are given for tea and rubber cultivation are more inaccessible than lands assigned under the Puduval Rules for ordinary cultivation. Tea and rubber lands are not wholly exempt from the payment of *thadivila* either.

You then referred to certain rules passed by the Hyderabad State. I have read those rules very carefully. I would request you to say whether the conditions in Hyderabad are in any way similar to those obtaining in Travancore. I would like to know whether you have studied the nature of communications in Hyderabad, its climatic conditions and density of population, how much land is available there for occupation, and what advantage has been taken of those rules by the people so far. Comparisons are odious and unprofitable. As I have already said, I shall re-examine the rates of *tharavila* and *thadivila*.

13. The peculiar difficulties of the people of Shertallai in the matter of puduval registry and the treatment of encroachment on porambokes.

Mr. P. K. Mathew (Member, Shertallai Taluk) said that, although the Puduval Rules had been revised, people were not receiving the benefits which those Rules were intended to afford. He stated that the reasons for that undesirable state of affairs, so far as Shertallai was concerned, were two, *viz.*, (1) undue delay in the disposal of *puduval* applications, and (2) high rates of *tharavila*. In regard to delay in the disposal of *puduval* applications, the Member said that only *kayal porambokes* were available for assignment in the Shertallai taluk, that in the case of such lands the Department of Public Works had to be consulted before assignment and that there was delay in consequence. With a view to avoid the difficulty, the Member suggested that such portions of the *kayal* as were required by that department might be demarcated beforehand and the balance available for assignment transferred to the head of *poramboke*. The Tahsildars could then dispose of applications for the registry of such lands without reference to that department to the extent allowed by the Rules. The Member also suggested that a rule might be added prescribing a time-limit for the disposal of applications for lands.

With regard to *tharavila*, the Member said that the lowest rate of *tharavila* imposed on lands in Shertallai was Rs. 25 per acre and that no maximum was fixed in that respect. He explained how the cost involved in the reclamation of *kayals* was heavy and how that cost varied in proportion to the depth of the *kayal*, and said that, in view of those circumstances, the rates of *tharavila* on reclaimed *kayal porambokes* should range between Rs. 5 and Rs. 25 per acre. The Member observed that very heavy *tharavila* was fixed by Peishkars and Tahsildars in order to show increased revenue in their respective Divisions and taluks. He pointed out that the attention of the Government should be directed not merely to the accrual of immediate income, but also to the disposal of a larger extent of land so as to increase the permanent revenue of the State.

Referring to the eastern taluks of Minachil, Kunnatnad, Todupuzha and Muvattupuzha, the Member said that the difficulty in the matter of the assignment of *puduval* lands in those taluks was due to the imposition of high rates of *thadivila*. He urged the necessity either for an appreciable reduction in the rates of *thadivila* or for the insertion of a clause in the Puduval Rules making it obligatory on the Forest Department to remove the tree growth on *puduval* lands within a specified time.

The Member brought to the notice of Government that the lands assigned to the depressed classes were not being cultivated for want of money, and because, under the

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